

Annual Report based on the Secretary's report to the Annual General Meeting on 28 October 1977

Medical Society for the Study of Venereal Diseases

During the past session, 65 new members were elected to the Society, 24 living in the United Kingdom and 41 abroad. Two members died and seven resigned. Fourteen members failed to pay their subscriptions, including three who were elected during the session, and were deemed to have resigned. The membership now stands at 570, an increase of 44 over 1976, of whom 331 live in the United Kingdom and 239 abroad. Far too many members required several reminder letters from the Treasurer before they paid their full subscriptions. It is appreciated that this was in no small part due to the fact that subscription rates have been increased two years in succession, but nevertheless, it was far too expensive to the Society.

In addition to the five ordinary meetings held during the session an additional one, a 'Symposium on penicillinase producing gonococci', was held in December. As has become customary, all were well attended, attracting capacity audiences of members and guests.

The Spring Meeting was held in Vienna from 5 to 8 May and was deemed a great success by all who attended. We thank Professor and Frau Luger, and their colleagues, for the smooth organisation of the scientific meetings and for the provision of the sumptuous social events.

The Council of the Society, under the Chairmanship of the President, Dr C. D. Alergant, held five meetings during the session, all of which were well attended. At their October meeting, Dr S. Lock, Editor of the *British Medical Journal* attended to discuss the financial position of the *British Journal of Venereal Diseases* and explain the British Medical Association's views on such specialist journals. The President expressed the Society's thanks to Dr Lock, who had broken off his holiday to attend the Council and

Annual General Meetings. Discussions between the Society and Dr Lock on the position of the *Journal* are continuing. Council also submitted evidence to the Royal Commission on the National Health Service. This evidence was prepared by a small subcommittee consisting of Dr R. D. Catterall (Convenor), Dr J. R. W. Harris, and Dr J. K. Oates to whom our thanks are due. Council also agreed that Hospital Practitioner grade posts were not appropriate in Special Clinics attached to teaching hospitals where they could block appointments to training posts. Professor Thomas Turner kindly declined to accept the honorarium for delivering the second Harrison Lecture and Council decided to use the monies to purchase a gavel and suitably inscribed block.

The Editor of the *British Journal of Venereal Diseases* Dr R. N. Thin and his colleagues, Dr J. D. Oriel and Dr B. A. Evans, are to be congratulated on continuing to maintain the high standard of papers and abstracts under continuing financial restraints. One issue of Volume 52 was devoted to the proceedings of the meeting of International Union against the Venereal Diseases and Treponematoses held in Malta in April 1976, while the other five issues contained 67 papers. In all, there were 432 pages compared with 428 in Volume 51.

At the Editorial Committee Meeting, disquiet was expressed at the rapid turnover of Editors in recent years. After some discussion it was agreed that this problem would be resolved within the next year or so. Differing views were expressed on the composition, function, and organisation of the Editorial Committee and, as mentioned above, these discussions are continuing.

The Specialist Advisory Committee,

under the Chairmanship of Dr R. S. Morton, held two meetings and confirmed the reports and recommendations of the teams which had visited a few clinics applying for recognition of Senior Registrar training posts. They aided Dr R. D. Catterall, the specialty's representative on the Monospecialty Committee on Dermatovenereology of the EUMS, in the completion of a form concerning specialisation in the United Kingdom, and this was the only event of note as far as the EUMS was concerned. An increasing amount of the Committee's time has been spent in considering applications from Senior Registrars to be enrolled for higher medical training and from newly appointed consultants to be accredited as specialists. The Joint Committee on Higher Medical Training expressed disquiet that some applicants for enrolment did not possess a recognised higher medical qualification, and the Specialist Advisory Committee is endeavouring to reassure the Joint Committee concerning the suitability of such applicants continuing their training as they had already been appointed to Senior Registrar posts before seeking enrolment.

We have every reason to be satisfied that, despite all restraints and constraints, the Society is thriving and expanding, and this is very gratifying in the present world situation.

Finally, I should like to thank all those who have helped, guided and encouraged me during my term in office as Secretary, the Presidents under whom I served, my fellow Officers, members of Council, and especially the many ordinary members. I am very grateful to them all and can only wish the same good fortune to my successor, Dr Jack Barrow.

C. B. S. SCHOFIELD
Hon. Secretary